

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE
NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

February 19, 2015

Andres Ayala

Good afternoon Senator Duff, Representative Janowski, Senator Kane, Representative Buck-Taylor and distinguished members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. I am honored to have been nominated by Governor Malloy to serve as Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles. I appreciate the opportunity to come before you to discuss my nomination as Commissioner.

I was born and raised in the City of Bridgeport. My parents migrated from Puerto Rico to Connecticut in search of a better life. They worked long hours to be able to provide a great education which served as the foundation for my success in professional and public work. I attended Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT obtaining an Associate's degree in Para-legal Sciences, a Bachelor's in Business Administration and a Master's in Education.

I was employed by the Bridgeport Board of Education for approximately twenty one years. During those years, I served as a teacher, Dean of Students and a Grants/Community resources coordinator. As a professional I have demonstrated to have excellent organizational, communication and listening skills. I have had the opportunity to manage projects from the planning stage through execution and completion. These skills have given me the opportunity to succeed as a professional educator and as an elected official.

I served in elected office for eighteen years. I served as a councilmember in the 137th district for ten years. In those ten years I served as chairman of the Public Safety, Economic and Community Development, Budget and School Building Committees. As a member of the Council I was able to rise through the ranks; I was appointed as Majority Leader and eventually with the support of my colleagues was voted in as President of the City Council. The years of service as councilman gave me the opportunity to address the concerns of those who felt they had no voice. In 2006, I ran for the office of State Representative in the 128th District where I served for three terms. While a State Rep. I served in various committees: Vice-chair of Finance & Revenue bonding, Chair of the Bonding Sub-committee on Transportation and I was appointed Assistant Majority Leader. In 2012, I ran for the 23rd State Senatorial seat and served one term. As a State Senator, I was assigned to Chair the Aging and Regulations and Review Committees and was also appointed as Assistant Majority Leader.

As an elected official I have addressed the issues and concerns of Bridgeport residents and as a result I have been able to improve the lives of many. I have been able to assist with developments such as Steel Point which started while I was on the City Council and as State Representative helped pass legislation to bring \$22 million in TIF financing for the development

and finally Bass Pro Shop is under construction on the site. I worked diligently as a member of the School Buildings Committee and as a result we have been able to build new schools. Currently, the City of Bridgeport is on its way to design and build a second train station in Bridgeport because of the efforts I spearheaded.

Today I am here as Governor Malloy's nominee to be the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles. In the short time I have been on the job I have been able to get a better appreciation for the work which is done at the Department. Without a shadow of a doubt the Department of Motor Vehicles touches the lives of every family across the State of Connecticut. I have been able to meet with Division Chiefs and have gotten a full understanding of how far DMV reaches into the lives of residents in Connecticut. A program which immediately got my attention is the "Drive Only" program. The program started making appointments for permits on December 1, 2014 and individuals started taking the knowledge test on January 2, 2015. The program has had a great start with over 34,000 knowledge tests scheduled. As of right now tests are being scheduled into September/October 2015. Over 2300 tests have been taken with over 1700 individuals passing the test. The first road tests will be given in April. We continue to work with advocates and others who are interested in the "Drive Only" program. Our staff is working diligently to ensure that the program works as efficiently as possible.

The next project I would like to discuss is one of DMV's most important projects: The implementation of our modernization project. Currently the DMV is operating with computers which are 30-40 years old and lack integration with each other. We are transitioning to a new system which will allow the DMV to get into the 21st Century. We are making a major and unprecedented customer service upgrade within our registration computer system. Ultimately the upgrade will result in an increase in online transactions and improve efficiency in customer service.

Some of the online transactions which will be possible:

Improvements to the existing online registration renewal program;

Online check for registration renewal hold ups, such as unpaid property taxes, lack of insurance and delinquent parking violations;

Reprint a registration certificate from a home or other computer;

Cancel a registration online;

Order online special plate, such as vanity plates;

Order online replacements for mutilated plates;

Provide new option online for customers to be contacted by DMV - either by mail or e-mail.

We are currently training all of our front line staff so they can become proficient in the system and help meet our goal of "going live" this year. I can go on with other things which are happening at the DMV but I wanted to highlight these two major projects as we are spending a

great deal of time and effort to get right. The other programs you might be familiar with continue to run effectively through the management of very competent division chiefs. I am going to stop here right now and am happy to answer any questions you might have.

Respectfully submitted,

Andres Ayala